

CATA- Radu

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Summary

The front office department of a hotel is a focal point through which communications are made. Its importance as a vessel for coordination has compelled many hotels to revamp their communication channels so that the required information can be easily communicated to the other departments. The hotels have devised ways of streamlining communication between departments and individual employees. This report analyses how communications are conducted between the front office and other departments. It also analyses the measures that have been effected to ensure seamless operations by smoothening communications. Then comprehensive conclusions are made from the analysis.

Background of the study

Kullabs (2019), described the front office as the most visible department and is regarded as the focal point of the hotel. It is responsible for carrying out reservations, registration of guests, and provision of information to the guests and staff. According to Talitha (2016), all departments in the hotel interrelate to conduct their daily operations in order to achieve customer satisfaction. This is made possible through the front office department. This department doubles up as the main communication hub for the hotel since all communications between departments, guests and staff begin and end at the front office. The telephone operator is also under this department and conducts official communications into and out of the hotel (Kullabs, 2019). Thus, the front office department is the centre through which all inter-departmental communications are effected. The departments in the hotel, among them Human Resource Management, Sales and Marketing, Security, Banquets, Food and Beverages, and Housekeeping, rely on the front office for inter coordination (Ahmada & Scott, 2014). This enables them to conduct their daily operations efficiently.

Relationship of the front office with other departments in the hotel business

1. The Banquets Department

The banquets department of the hotel combines the functions of the food and beverage department and the sales and marketing department (Grossmann, 2019). There must be continuous communication between the front office and the banquets department so that necessary information about the guests and scheduled events can be shared. The departments also coordinate to design routine announcements board and listing of activities. A front office serves as the centre for logical communications to unregistered guests on the events (Haktanir & Harris, 2005). This is effected through the maintenance of a reliable communication channel between the banquets department and the front office.

2. Housekeeping Department

The housekeeping department and the front office should communicate effectively in order to control the rooms and ensure they are in good condition (Grossmann, 2019). This department is responsible for furnishing the front office with various reports on room status and occupancy. These include the room report, discrepancy report, and occupancy status (Kullabs, 2019). Front office staff use the room status report and countercheck with the records to establish a

discrepancy report. The housekeeping department is also expected to provide information to the front office in order to establish the occupancy report. This reflects the actual number of guests in the hotel. Hotel management relies on the room occupancy report to project the budgets, expenses, income per head and compute room revenue (Haktanir & Harris, 2005). The front office and housekeeping department are expected to maintain consistent communication, which enables them to handle special guests and VIPs (Talitha, 2016). This is an important group of guests who require special treatment and amenities, and this is achieved through efficient communication between the front office and the housekeeping department.

3. Security department and the front office

Security in the hotel is extremely important, and this can only be effected through maintenance of streamlined communications between the security department and the front office. Necessary safety measures such as fire safety and systems for emergency communication is relayed through the front office to the security department (Grossmann, 2019). Thus, these departments maintain regular and efficient communication in order to ensure the guests assured of maximum security and safety in case of an emergency (Kullabs, 2019).

Measures to enhance the effectiveness of the communication for proper hotel operations

Success in the hotel industry is primarily driven by customer satisfaction (Grossmann, 2019). To achieve this, the hotel management must ensure there is efficient communication between the staff, departments, and sections. This hotel has put in place several measures to ensure that the communications from the front office to other departments and among the employees are as effective as possible. These include frequent training on communication skills, leveraging the transparency in the hotel's sections, and the adoption of a messaging platform for the staff (Grossmann, 2019).

Activities of the Human Resources department

The Human Resource Management department holds frequent training sessions, seminars and workshops throughout the year to sharpen the skills of the employees. Front office staff must possess excellent communication skills in order to coordinate with their colleagues from other departments (Talitha, 2016). That will enable them to obtain and convey the required messages accurately hence customer satisfaction. These have been essential in reinforcing the best

practices in the hotel industry and ensuring maximum compliance with the set standards and regulations (Grossmann, 2019). They also help in addressing emerging issues among the employees whereby they are asked to voice their concerns, and the management looks for an amicable solution (Talitha, 2016). Regular workshops, seminars, and staff meetings improve the efficiency of communication in the hotel by enabling the team to understand the needs of the team members and find better ways to inter coordinate (Kullabs, 2019).

Increasing the level of transparency in communications has proven to be an effective way of improving trust in hotel employees (Ahmada & Scott, 2014). The staff members are included in regular open conversations, which provides a sense of belonging to the hotel. It also encourages maximum engagement across the hotel. Improving the knowledge, the hotel's transparent corporate values has considerably increased the level of engagement among employees (Grossmann, 2019). The measures have enhanced communication between departments through the front office, thus optimizing efficiency.

In a bid to enhance the communication between the front office and other departments, the hotel management implemented a mobile messaging platform. It enables staff to communicate easily during their daily operations. This platform avails a variety of secure, flexible, and efficient messaging tools for communication between the hotel staff (Grossmann, 2019). The platform allows the departments in the hotel to send messages to the required department at the right time. This makes it possible for the concerned departments to initiate an immediate response. Thus, the efficiency of the communication between the departments and the front office is enhanced. The platform also facilitates engagement in the day to day activities of the hotel. An Enterprise messaging platform also enables the department to reach out to the front office and other departments through push notifications and private messages (Talitha, 2016). This has improved the flexibility of the communications in the company. The simplicity and robust nature of this platform have improved the level of engagement between departments and individual employees, thus fostering a communication culture among the team (Grossmann, 2019).

The hotel management has developed a Total Quality Management (TQM) culture among the employees as a way of enhancing hotel communications. TQM is a popular trend in the hotel industry that has revolutionized the efficiency of communications between other departments in the hotel and the front office (G.Partlow, 1996). This is mainly because of its focus on customer satisfaction, and harnessing tools and techniques of enhancing the performance of the

organization. It is also preferred because of its devotion to improving organizational processes through training and development of an organizational culture that embraces quality service among staff (G.Partlow, 1996). TQM culture enhances employee involvement in the daily operations of the hotel by encouraging a bottom-up communication approach. This ensures that the relevant department is addressing the concerns of the employees. The bottom-up communication approach enhances the interchange of ideas within the firm, thus maximizing teamwork (Talitha, 2016). TQM avails a variety of communication techniques that increase the awareness of the hotel's quality objectives and mandate (G.Partlow, 1996). This enables them to work on regularly improving their skills to meet the requirements of the hotel. The versatile nature of TQM has enabled the hotel to refocus its communication strategies across departments. This has had a tremendous impact on the communications between the front office and other departments and resulted in smooth operations (G.Partlow, 1996).

CONCLUSION

The discussion above shows that the front office has a central role in the organization. It is responsible for ensuring asynchronous communication between the hotel's departments and the guests. The management has implemented many techniques to enhance the effectiveness of communication between other departments and the front office. These include regular training, seminars, and workshops to improve the communication skills of the employees. They also developed communication channels that enable the employees to channel the messages and requests to the appropriate departments at the right time. In essence, for the hotel's operations to run efficiently, the hotel has invested in improving the process of communication between the front office and other departments.

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